



PSC NEWS

Missouri Public Service Commission

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PSC TO CONSIDER RULE ON REQUESTS FOR EXPANDED TELEPHONE CALLING PLANS

Jefferson City (October 7, 2004)---A task force named by the Public Service Commission to investigate expanded calling scopes in Missouri, formally submitted its report to the Commission during the Commission's agenda meeting today. After that presentation, the Commission directed the PSC Staff to begin drafting a rule to implement a process to consider expanded calling requests in Missouri.

The task force report recommended the Commission initiate a rule and implement a process to review requests for the establishment of new expanded calling plans or changes to existing expanded calling plans. The report, supported by a majority of its members, states the process should apply only to calling plans providing toll-free calling or discounted toll plans, within reasonable communities of interest. According to the report, the criteria for a community of interest should include, but not be limited to:

- * community calling to medical service providers;
- * educational institutions;
- * governmental or social service offices; and
- * commercial/trade centers.

Under the task force recommendation, the process for establishing expanded local calling can be initiated in one of three ways by a petition to the Commission from:

- * a telecommunications company;
- * at least 15% of the subscribers in the exchange; or
- * a governing body of a municipality or school district.

That petition must include: 1) a description of the new plan or changes to an existing expanded calling plan; 2) the proposed price and terms of the new service; 3) whether the plan is optional or mandatory; and 4) toll or local classification of calling plan traffic and associated inter-company compensation, if any, to be utilized to facilitate the plan.

(more)

The 15-member task force has also recommended the Commission evaluate current inter-company compensation plans to help make calling plans more economically feasible and to also investigate whether additional competitive incentives can be achieved with the establishment of a high-cost, state support fund to ensure that basic local service rates remain affordable for all Missourians.

Background: The Missouri Public Service Commission established a this task force in March 2004. One of the primary objectives placed on the task force was to investigate and consider what changes, if any, should be made concerning the Metropolitan Calling Area (MCA) plan and rural calling scopes. MCA is a service allowing expanded calling in the Springfield, Kansas City and St. Louis metropolitan areas. For a flat monthly rate, subscribing customers can call other MCA subscribers and certain exchanges in the metropolitan area on a toll-free basis.

Task Force Members: State Representative Rachel Bringer (D-Palmyra), State Representative Robert Thane Johnson (R-Lee's Summit), State Senator John Griesheimer (R-Washington), State Senator Jim Mathewson (D-Sedalia), Virginia McNabb (consumer representative), Lee's Summit Mayor Karen Messerli (representing the Missouri Municipal League), Mike Dandino (Office of the Public Counsel), Bill Biere (Chariton Valley Telephone Company), John Idoux (Sprint), Arthur Martinez (CenturyTel), Michael Pauls (AT&T), Craig Unruh (SBC), John Van Eschen, Bill Voight and Natelle Dietrich (PSC Staff).